Vol. IX, No. 4 HUMAN EVENTS January 23, 1952

EMERGENCY IN THE AIR

By Bonner Fellers
Brig. Gen., U. S. Army, Ret'd.

Concealed behind a thicket of budget items is a threat to our national security. The stark fact, obscured in the wrangling over allocation of defense funds, is that we are in danger of losing our priceless superiority in the air. And that means the difference between peace and war. For, as all the experts agree, the atom bomb is the deterrent that keeps Stalin from plunging the world into war, and the atom bomb is useless unless it can be effectively delivered by air power.

This danger — the loss of air power — did not come up yesterday. But only during the past six months has the grim picture been unfolding.

The incontrovertible fact, supported by constantly accumulating evidence, is that the Chinese Reds have achieved numerical air superiority in Korea. Our strategic intercontinental air force — the one that could deliver the atom bomb — is dangerously small. Air defense for continental United States is inadequate. Air cover has not been provided for the army which General Eisenhower is trying to build up in Europe.

This inadequacy was tacitly admitted by President Truman and his National Security Council last November, when they approved for the fiscal year 1952 (that is, July 1, 1952 to June 30, 1953) an increase in the Air Force from 80 to 126 combat groups. The increase represents the maximum expansion possible under existing equality of priorities and rationing of strategic materials among the three armed forces. The minimum cost of this expansion was then estimated at $24 billion, for the first year of a three-year program.

Suddenly, on December 28, the Bureau of the Budget, representing the President, in effect reversed the decision to expand our air strength. The White House, *without consultation with the Defense Department,* announced a budget limitation of military expenditures. The Air Force estimates for the fiscal year were cut from the requisite $24 billion to $16 billion.

In the past two weeks, due to Air Force protests, the sum has been raised to $20 billion; but with such strings — mostly contract complications — that the $4 billion thus granted can't be spent this year. So, the $8 billion slice remains in effect for this year.

The knife went deeper. The $4 billion item in the 1952 budget for a two-year military base construction project — for Army, Navy and Air — was halved. That

Copyright 1952 by HUMAN EVENTS, INC.
Published weekly at 1136 Eighteenth Street, N.W., Washington 6, D. C.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

meant a curtailment of the facilities — runways, barracks, oil tanks, warehouses, etc. — necessary for 126 combat groups. It also meant that without the construction of adequately protected dispersal areas at air bases, our grounded aircraft would be sitting ducks for an enemy air attack.

These budgetary cuts reduced the talk about 126 combat groups to so much palaver. Yet, to the amazement of all who know the score, the press generally gives the impression that, despite the budgetary changes, the Air Force will have its 126 combat groups by 1954. It is difficult to correct this impression; this decision to limit the expansion program for the Air Force has apparently been made on a high level.

II

What must be the effect of this decision on our power of defense? For answer, we go to the unpleasant record coming from the current proving ground — Korea.

In that unfortunate struggle, as the dispatches testify, the Red Air Force is numerically stronger than our own. They have an estimated 850 jet fighters to our 125. They have 200 TU-2 medium bombers, comparable to our B-26 type, while our force of B-26's totals about 150. In the small air space over the fighting front we are using nearly one-third of the entire defensive American Air Force. While the few strategic bombers we have in use do excel those of Russia in performance, the Red jet fighters have proven themselves at least the equal of our jets in combat characteristics. Finally, we have lost more than 800 aircraft, compared to Red China's loss of less than half that number.

This is not to say that Russian airplanes and enemy pilots are superior to ours. Rather, it means that we have flown — have had to fly — many more sorties. In combat, our flyers have shown their superiority. They have shot down four or five enemy planes for every one we have lost to Red pilots. Our principal losses have resulted from enemy ground fire, a consequence of our close support of ground troops and our interdiction missions. (Interdiction, in practical terms, means bombing of supply trains and bridges.)

Now, this bitter picture is of a fairly recent origin. When the North Korean forces struck on June 26, 1950, they had some 200 obsolescent Russian aircraft, vintage of World War II. Our Air Force put this puny opposition out of the way quickly, so that after the first few weeks the North Koreans had to fight without air cover; their defeat, MacArthur's Inchon landing and his pursuit to the Yalu followed as a matter of course.

In November, when the Chinese Red Army openly entered the war, it had to rely on masses of ground troops, because its air force was not ready. By sheer weight of numbers they pushed our forces southward as far as Seoul. But they could not strike a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

decisive blow, nor go farther south, not only because of the stubborn resistance of the Eighth Army, but also because the interdiction missions of our Air Force prevented their amassing sufficient supplies as their lines were extended.

The Reds learned their lesson. They began to build up their air strength in Korea and Manchuria. Fields were built, supplies were stock-piled, satellite pilots were given combat training. The Reds were determined to loosen the grip of our air interdiction on their supply lines. With a free flow of supplies, the overwhelming mass of infantry would enable Red China to challenge the whole Allied position.

There is reason to believe — Communists being what they are — that the so-called truce negotiations are being dragged on to gain time for the further strengthening of the Chinese Red forces; note the insistence of the Red negotiators on permission to build air bases behind their lines, after a truce has been concluded. This seems to be a clear admission that they may contemplate starting the war all over again when they feel strong enough to strike effectively through the air.

III

The layman will ask, why can't we rush enough planes to the Korea theatre to prevent the threatening debacle? Perhaps we could. But, in so doing we would have to weaken our air strength in other vital areas and thus invite threats to our global position; unless, of course, our appropriations were revised, both as to the procurement of aircraft and the building of bases, with global air supremacy as the goal of defense.

The rushing of air reinforcements to Korea to prevent a possible collapse of our position there would be like turning on the faucet when the supply of water is low. It is not the immediate flow of water that counts, it is the level of water in the reservoir. An emergency reinforcement of our Korean air force might dangerously sap our already inadequate reservoir of global air power.

General Vandenberg undoubtedly had in mind the danger inherent in our Korean position when he pointed out in his Chicago speech of last December 7th: "Air power can be committed so quickly and consumed so rapidly anywhere in the world that local air superiority can never be maintained for long without global air superiority to back it up." Again, on January 2nd, Vandenberg said at a press conference: "The Russian air threat is immediate and unescapable . . . the United States is just beginning to make the investment in air power that the developing world situation demands."

Today Russia, not the United States, has global air superiority to back up air operations over Korea. Russia has the reservoir able to meet the demands of all the faucets. We haven't.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In view of the hundreds of billions spent by Mr. Truman on foreign aid and, presumably, defense, the American people have a right to ask: how has it happened that we are fast becoming second best in world air power?

Appreciating the pre-eminence of air power, our "best" Congress in twenty years, the 80th, voted funds for a 70-group Air Force. But the Pentagon, under the domination of infantrymen Marshall, Bradley and Collins (in turn under the domination of the White House), thought otherwise. To them, UMT was more important, and so was the building of a vast land army.

The President, doubtless influenced by the Pentagon, impounded the 650 million dollar Air Force funds voted by the 80th Congress. His reason for so doing — according to THE FORRESTAL DIARY — was that he had decided that 48 groups were quite sufficient. Consequently, in his personally authorized war in Korea, Mr. Truman was caught with an excellent but numerically inadequate air arm.

To be sure, the budget for the fiscal year 1951-2 provided for an expansion of the Air Force to 95 groups. But there is the matter of time between authorization and the putting of aircraft in the theatre of operations. Not a single airplane ordered after the start of the Korean War, June, 1950, is yet available for combat today, and the 95-group program will not become a reality until late this year. Under the budget as it now stands, the contemplated 126 combat groups cannot be achieved until 1955, even if the money is appropriated for them.

Meanwhile, Russian aircraft production is at full scale. The Commissars learned well the lesson of World War II. When it began, the Red Air Force was used principally to supplement artillery and extend its ranges. Moscow recognized this shortcoming and by 1946 an enormous aircraft program was under way. The official Moscow Communist Agitators Notebook declared, on August 18, 1946: "Soviet airplanes must fly higher, farther and faster than those of other countries. . . . We must have the most powerful Air Force in the world."

National security demands of the 82nd Congress that it apply itself to the job of providing us with global air superiority, as quickly as possible. Our economy demands enormous savings, but let them be at the expense of foreign aid, vote-buying schemes, expensive bureaucracies and defense measures that cannot be of much use unless they support air power. Nor should inter-service bickerings be permitted to block this essential program.

On it depends the American Destiny.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HUMAN EVENTS

FRANK C. HANIGHEN, *Editor* FRANK CHODOROV, *Associate Editor*

Volume IX, No. 4 Wednesday, January 23, 1952 Washington, D. C.

The Eisenhower Plot: In the past forty-eight hours, the first outlines of the pattern which his friends here will use to nominate General Eisenhower became visible.

It has been obscured by the deafening gabble about what went on at the GOP meeting in San Francisco ("why doesn't Governor Warren act like a Republican?", and other such trivia). But old stagers, who watched how the business was accomplished in 1940, greeted the appearance of the first outlines with cynical smiles and "told-you-so's". "It's the old game that put over Wendell Willkie, all over again", they remarked.

What these initial signs are may be put, in brief form, as follows: Some Wall Street international bankers are up to the same old tricks they pulled off so brilliantly in 1940. (In that year, the Willkie blitz machine utilized a vast network of utility and banking interests to pressure the GOP delegates.)

Specifically, we can report that pressure is now being applied (by these banking interests) on businessmen who favor Taft but have the misfortune to owe money to these Eastern bankers. We have, on investigation, spotted several cases in which businessmen (leaders in their trans-Appalachian communities) have received communications from their New York creditors, urging them to join pro-Eisenhower committees and to raise or contribute funds thereto. These debtors happen to favor Taft and/or MacArthur and are not happy about the communication. For, they want no trouble with the gentlemen who hold the notes. At this moment, we cannot as yet ascertain just whether or not the debtors will surrender their political independence.

Anyhow, word about this kind of pro-Eisenhower operation has been getting around, and has been followed by indignation, consternation and — what is more important — cogitation among those in the Taft camp.

Taft Counter-Attack? What is the outcome of this cogitation? What will Taft do, in the face of this developing menace to his nomination?

We do not profess to know the answer. But we do know and can report some of the talk which has followed the advent of this development in Washington.

First of all, it is being eloquently argued that, on the plane of principle, Taft can be urged to make an issue of this. Bankers and financial interests which play ball with and profit from the Fair Deal (in contrast to those who engage in "straight" banking) are just as much a menace to the weal of the country as Socialists, Communists and corruption practitioners. These elements of high finance played a role, and a big one, in getting us into both World Wars. What they are up to now should be discussed in the public forum.

Also — so some Taft men agree — the GOP should place their appeal to the voters on the basis of U. S. national interest. Those bankers, doing business in the international field, who collide with this principle justifiably face attack. Such forensics would be in no sense "class warfare". There are lots of financial people who do not truckle to the handout boys in the nation's capital.

Next, there are potent reasons why Taft, if he chooses this course, would emerge the victor. The plain people everywhere — it is urged — would rise to such a tocsin. Those who had been deceived by the false appeals of Big Government — which surreptitiously plays with these financial elements —

Copyright 1952 by HUMAN EVENTS, INC.
Published weekly at 1136 Eighteenth St., N.W., Washington 6, D. C.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

would suddenly see the political picture clearly. Additionally, Taft, because of his known integrity, will never win, nor be burdened with, the support of these elements. They will knife him to the last.

Finally, such a Taft counter-attack would lay the basis for his election campaign, once he is nominated. He could then expose the true picture of the Fair Deal, its alliance with venal financial interests and the names of the financiers on the roster of the Fair Deal commissariat. This course — say those who advocate it — would be far sounder than piddling concessions to Fair Deal thinking, like "a little Point IV", "a little Federal aid to education", etc., etc.

What Taft will do about all this remains uncertain. But he is too intelligent a man not to understand the situation which has inevitably arisen.

Ike's Return: You can get a date — guaranteed absolutely — for the General's return to this country from almost anyone supporting his candidacy. But in this skeptical city, few trust these prognostications.

However, there have been, in the past month, several "cold turkey" reports to the effect that the General will retire and come back to this country sometime in the first fortnight of March. We checked on these reports at the time and found they come from no interested parties, no Democrats nor Eisenhower Republicans, indeed from no one who has an axe to grind. The source is one which has a unique position to know such facts — purely as facts.

Now in the past two days, we learn that this coldly impartial source says the General has postponed his return and will not be back here until approximately the first two weeks in May. Make what you can of that.

Watch For: A speech on the air by former President Herbert Hoover next Sunday, January 27, over CBS-TV and CBS radio, from 1:30 to 2 p.m., EST. It is reported this address will be another "re-examination" of our foreign political and military policies.

Strategy of Committees: Smooth working relationship between the Taft forces and the new GOP Senate floor leader was seen last week. Senator Styles Bridges, the minority leader (who is by no means a Taft enthusiast), got support from the Ohioan and his friends, to put Senator Joe McCarthy in the place Joe has ardently wanted: on the Appropriations subcommittee dealing with State Department requests for funds (subcommittee on State and Judiciary of the Appropriations Committee of the Senate).

The Wisconsin Senator was pushed off that place last spring when the death of Senator Vandenberg caused a committee re-shuffle. Now he's back with the blessing of Bridges, Taft and Senator Hugh Butler of Nebraska. The latter, as allocator of Republican committee posts and friend of Taft, collaborated willingly. The way is now paved for McCarthy to interrogate critically the State Department functionaries, in the next few months, as the latter seek money to pay the salaries of personnel whom the Wisconsin legislator has so consistently lambasted.

Likewise, that Administration-controlled group, the Senate Committee on Elections, dedicated to smashing what they call "McCarthyism", received a bad bump during the past week. The GOP leadership decided to remove Senator Margaret Chase Smith from that Committee and to transfer her to another post; and then to substitute a good friend of McCarthy, Senator Dirksen of Illinois. Senator Smith of Maine is no friend of the Wisconsin Senator, but she has indicated willingness to be transferred. With Dirksen on the Election Committee, the chances of a vote of censure of Senator McCarthy by the Committee have diminished perceptibly.

The point of all this is that the new GOP leadership in the Senate is working smoothly (so far). Neither Senator Margaret Smith nor indeed Senator Butler of Nebraska are exactly overflowing with good will towards McCarthy. But the important thing is that the interests of the Party have triumphed over personal frictions.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Farm Front: It is no secret around there that the Democratic Administration has privately dropped (perhaps, only put in cold storage) the famous Brannan Plan for bribing the farmers into bureaucratic slavery by farm subsidies. Two years ago, conservative farm organizations, led by the American Farm Bureau Federation, put up an effective fight against the Brannan version of totalitarianism.

Moreover, another change in Administration strategy looms — according to shrewd watchers of the farm field. This — it is forecast — will be Administration advocacy of legislation for 100 per cent of parity price supports. We hear prophesies that this will be the policy of the Department of Agriculture. Already, emphasis on this policy has risen in the ranks of the National Farmers Union, left-wing organization, which in the past has had a way of being just ahead of the Department's shifts in policy. The cry of "100 per cent of parity" might prove very good election bait.

On the other hand, the leaders of the powerful American Farm Bureau Federation are said to be cool towards this cry. They fear that, if such policy were enacted, the non-farm consumer would rebel at the very heavy costs. This view, however, is that of the leaders. While election tubs are being thumped, the rank and file of the Farm Bureau might find such a rhythm rather pleasing.

Meanwhile, quite a different approach is being explored by Congressman Howard Buffett of Nebraska. He believes that much sentiment would rally to legislation along the following lines: a bill which would (1) wipe out the whole apparatus of price supports, but (2) at the same time would abolish price controls on farm commodities. Since farmers — it is argued — at the present time are more anxious to get rid of ceilings on farm prices than they are of maintaining price "floors", they might go for an elimination of the whole system of controls and hand-outs in the field of agriculture.

China: News that the Reds are building big air bases in Southern China and in Hainan as springboards for an attack on French Indo-China stirs demands in Washington for accelerated aid to Chiang Kai-shek.

From this stronghold on the island of Formosa, Chiang could raid the Southern China coast and break up Red communications leading to the Indo-China border. He has, at present, some 400,000 soldiers on Formosa, but only about 70,000 are equipped for fighting. Military aid from the U. S. has been stepped up in the past six months, to some extent. The Nationalist forces include many soldiers whose homes and families are in the southern coastal areas of the mainland. If properly equipped, they would fight well in landing operations. Finally, there is talk again of the need for blockading China; Chiang's navy was doing no little harm to the Red trade when it was stopped by the Acheson policy.

In circles which watch closely the Far Eastern picture, there is suspicion of the Japanese Premier's talk about recognizing the Nationalist Government of Formosa. It is believed that the Premier's statement was inspired by John Foster Dulles as a move to allay Congressional doubt about the Japanese Peace Treaty and to hasten its ratification by the U. S. Senate. Once the treaty is ratified — it is suggested by the doubters — talk of Japan recognizing Chiang will subside, at the insistence of the State Department. Meanwhile, it is reported that British diplomats in Tokyo are working hard to prevent Japanese recognition of the Nationalist Government.

Subsidizing Socialism: Anger is rising in banking committees on Capitol Hill against the Export-Import Bank, which gets Treasury dollars for lending abroad and not always to the most careful of debtors. Notice has been taken of an item in the January 2 issue of Professor Walter Spahr's excellent "Monetary Notes". Prof. Spahr, always alert for misuse of American funds, spotted the following:

"The Government of Israel 'according to the International Financial News Survey' has decided to nationalize part of the installations of the Palestine Potash Company Ltd. — presently owned by the British — and to abrogate the Company's concession. The nationalization is to be financed by £900,000 *supplied from loans previously obtained from the Export-Import Bank.*" [Our italics.]

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Members of Congress indignantly ask why we should lend money to a government to nationalize an industry. It is expected that officials of the Export-Import Bank will be hailed before the Banking and Currency Committee to explain these doings.

Sweden Starts It: Harvard Professor Schlichter proposed, more than a year ago, that the government issue a "purchasing power" bond — one that would be redeemed, at maturity, at what the dollar would buy then as compared with the purchasing power of the dollar at the time of issuance. The idea was to protect the bondholder from loss due to inflation. The fact is that as wartime "savings" bonds mature, many purchasers are realizing that they suffered a loss in purchasing power, and as a result the government finds itself redeeming many more of these bonds than it can resell to the public. The professor's suggestion stemmed not only from concern for the bondholder, but more so from concern over the plight of the government. The Treasury Department, for various reasons, did not accept the suggestion; but it cannot be written off. It is "one of the things" that a spendthrift government can resort to in its desperate need for money.

Sweden, author of a number of Socialistic schemes, has taken the plunge. But, not yet the government of Sweden; it is the Kooperative Foerbundet, the national association of Sweden's cooperative associations, that has taken upon itself the job of introducing the "purchasing power" bond to the world, according to a dispatch in the *New York Times* of January 20. A formula has been worked out whereby the redemption value of the bond is tied in with a cost-of-living index. In that way, the K. F. protects its bondholders from loss due to inflation; in that way, also, it advertises its recognition of the government's intent to further depreciate the currency. Its lack of faith in the national money is emphasized by the provision that the depreciation bonus will be limited to fifty per cent of the face value of the bond it is issuing; if the government cuts the kroner to more than one-half its present purchasing power the bondholder must take the loss.

The action of the K. F. is simply an admission of its rather quivering faith in the money of its country. When that lack of faith becomes general, when people will not accept money in exchange for goods or services, then we have the final act in the tragedy of money.

McCarthy and Marshall: War-made heroes seem to hold up no better than most war-time products. Under the glare of peace-time scrutiny, the accolades heaped upon them melt away, and all we have left is the naked form of a mere mortal. It doesn't take long, these days. The case of Gen. George C. Marshall is particularly in point. Others have indicated the inadequacies, personal and official, that hardly justify the stature accorded him by official propaganda; it remained for the intrepid Senator from Wisconsin, Joseph R. McCarthy, to show by the record that the ability of the General (and the former Secretary of State), were less than brilliant; that the country's affairs did not prosper under his management. The Senator set forth the facts in a speech from the Senate floor on June 14, 1951. The speech has been revised and has been made available to the public in a book by The Devin-Adair Co., 23 East 26th St., New York, N. Y., at the sensible price of $1.00.

The substance of the argument is that as both military and civilian leader, Gen. Marshall pursued a policy that was peculiarly orientated so as to promote the foreign policy of the U. S. S. R. The documentation of this charge is most convincing, particularly because Senator McCarthy relies on sources admittedly favorable to the General-Secretary. The Senator does not impugn Mr. Marshall's patriotism; the question which the book still leaves open is whether the poor judgment displayed was his own or resulted from following the advice of men of sinister motive; and finally, whether these men still have influence in the shaping of our foreign policy.

Entered as second class matter at the Post Office, Washington, D. C.
Quotation up to a paragraph is permitted with credit to HUMAN EVENTS. For reproduction or more extensive quotation address requests to HUMAN EVENTS, 1136 Eighteenth Street, N.W., Washington 6, D.C. Trial subscription, three months for $3. Six months, $5.50. One year, $10. Two years, $18. Domestic airmail (including APO andFPO) one year, $12.00; foreign (regular mail) one year, $11. Foreign airmail rates on request. Please remit in U.S.A. DOLLARS. Allow two weeks for new subscription or change in address to become effective.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED